



18 DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS NOVENA

INTRODUCTION: Dear Friends, on this third day of the Novena in preparation for Christmas, we ponder on the meeting of two kinswomen, who received blessings and a mission, eager to support and help each other at a time of major change in their lives.

SCRIPTURE: Lk 1: 39 – 45 (*Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord?*)

REFLECTION: How affirming the revelation of Elizabeth must have been to Mary who secretly pondered such unfathomable mystery. She would have felt understood and supported by her kinswoman who similarly share God's favour. Do we have someone to share 'God-experience' in our life? Elizabeth was the first to bear witness to the Lord's presence in our world. Do we bear witness and encourage each other along our faith journey? Helping another to notice God's doing, brings true joy and hope, way beyond our expectation.

O ADVENT ANTIPHONS: *O Root of Jesse's stem, sign of God's love for all his people: come to save us without delay!*

INTERCESSIONS: Response: Come Lord Jesus, come and be born in our hearts!

Our family, friends and well-wishers are great blessings. We often see material gifts as a blessing and overlook people around us; may the Christmas celebration strengthen our bond of love. **R/-**

Mary brought God to Elizabeth in her heart and in her womb. May we bring God's presence to everyone we meet, and in turn see God in all who come into our lives. **R/-**

Lord, as Christmas draws ever closer, free us from being self-absorbed and self-centred. Instead like Mary, may we too go out in loving service of others. **R/-**

The Spirit of God in Elizabeth rejoiced in the presence of Mary. We pray for those who have been friends to us, for all whose companionship or example lifts our heart to praise. **R/-**

Mary carried the living Word within her. May we bear witness to the Word and the Eucharist we receive daily. **R/-**

CONCLUDING PRAYER: Lord, at the angel's message, Mary, the immaculate Virgin, became the temple of God. After her example, may we steadfastly follow your will. We make this prayer through Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

CONCLUDING HYMN: (Optional)

